

H. R. 351.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

JANUARY 8, 1851.

Ordered to be printed.

Mr. PHELPS gave notice of his intention to offer the following as a substitute for the bill of the House, No. 351, "to reduce and modify the rates of postage in the United States."

RATES OF LETTER POSTAGE.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Represen-*
2 *tatives of the United States of America in Congress*
3 *assembled,* That from and after the thirtieth day of June,
4 Anno Domini, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, the postage
5 on all letters and sealed packets conveyed in the mail of
6 the United States, shall be as follows, viz: Every letter, or
7 sealed packet not exceeding half an ounce in weight, con-
8 veyed any distance within the United States, when pre-
9 paid, shall be charged with three cents, or when unpaid
10 with five cents postage, and a like sum for every addition-
11 al half ounce, or fractional part thereof; that all drop let-
12 ters, or letters to be delivered at the office where deposited,

13 shall be charged with one cent postage, prepaid, or with
 14 two cents, when unpaid. And all circulars, handbills, or
 15 advertisements printed or lithographed, and sealed or un-
 16 sealed, shall be charged with letter postage.

1 **SEC. 2.** *And be it further enacted,* That so much
 2 of any law which makes it the duty of post riders, or other
 3 carriers of the mail to receive letters to be mailed and
 4 compensates them for the service, is abolished.

LETTERS BY STEAMBOATS NOT UNDER CONTRACT.

1 **SEC. 3.** *And be it further enacted,* That it shall be
 2 the duty of every master or manager of any steamboat not
 3 under contract to carry the mail, which shall pass from one
 4 port or place to another port or place in the United States
 5 where a Post Office is established, to deliver within three
 6 hours after his arrival, if in the day time, and within two
 7 hours after the next sunrise, if the arrival be in the night,
 8 all letters and packets (not relating to the cargo, or any
 9 part thereof,) addressed to, or destined for such port or
 10 place, to the postmasters there, for which service the said
 11 master or manager shall be entitled to receive two cents
 12 for every letter or packet from the person or persons de-
 13 positing the same in his hands to be delivered as aforesaid,
 14 instead of the two cents hitherto paid by postmasters.
 15 That if any master or manager of a steamboat shall fail
 16 so to deliver any letter or packet so entrusted to his care,

17 he shall incur a penalty of twenty dollars for every such
18 failure.

LETTERS BY STEAMBOATS UNDER CONTRACT.

1 SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That all letters
2 and packets that are carried on any of the waters of the
3 United States, in steamboats or packets, under contract
4 with the Post Office Department to carry the mail, shall
5 be subject to the same postage as if carried in the mail
6 overland.

SHIP LETTERS.

1 SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That no ship or
2 vessel, whether foreign or owned within the United States,
3 arriving at any port therein, where a post office is estab-
4 lished, shall be permitted to report, make entry, or break
5 bulk, until the masters or commanders shall have delivered
6 to the postmasters all letters directed to any person or per-
7 sons within the United States, or the Territories thereof,
8 which, under his care, or within his power, shall be brought
9 in such ship or vessel. That it shall be the duty of the
10 collector, or other officer of the port empowered to receive
11 entries of ships or vessels, to require from every master
12 or commander of such ship or vessel an oath or affirma-
13 tion, purporting that he has delivered all such letters ex-
14 cept such as are directed to the owner or consignee of
15 such ship or vessel; and if any commander or master of

16 any such ship or vessel shall break bulk before he has
 17 complied with the requirements of this act, every such of-
 18 fender shall, on conviction thereof, forfeit for every such
 19 offence a sum not exceeding one hundred dollars. That
 20 the payment of two cents to the master or commander for
 21 each letter so delivered, is hereby abolished. That the
 22 postmasters, by whom said letters are so received, shall
 23 deliver or forward the same at the rates established by the
 24 first section of this act.

NEWSPAPERS, PERIODICALS, AND MAGAZINES SENT TO SUBSCRIBERS.

1 **SEC. 6.** *And be it further enacted,* That on newspa-
 2 pers sent from the office of publication to subscribers, by
 3 mail, weighing not exceeding one ounce each, the postage
 4 shall be paid quarterly, in advance, to the postmaster at the
 5 office where received, by the person to whom they are
 6 sent, in accordance with the instructions which may be is-
 7 sued by the Postmaster General, and at the following rates
 8 of postage per annum: On newspapers published once a
 9 month, ten cents; published twice a month, twenty cents;
 10 once a week, forty cents; twice a week, eighty cents; three
 11 times a week, one dollar and twenty cents; and at rates in
 12 like proportion when published oftener or less often than
 13 herein specified. For each additional ounce, or fraction of
 14 an ounce an additional rate shall be charged. And all pe-
 15 riodicals and magazines, sent from the office of publication

16 to subscribers, which shall be unconnected with any manu-
17 script or written matter, and which it is, or may be lawful
18 to transmit through the mails of the United States, shall be
19 chargeable with postage at the rate of one cent for each
20 copy sent of no greater weight than one ounce, and one
21 cent in addition for each additional ounce, or fraction of an
22 ounce, to be paid quarterly in advance in like manner as
23 is provided for newspapers.

PAMPHLETS, AND TRANSIENT NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, AND PERI-
ODICALS.

1 *SEC. 7. And be it further enacted,* And on those
2 newspapers which are not sent from the office of publica-
3 tion, and on those which, though sent from the office of
4 publication, are not sent to subscribers, the postage shall
5 be at the rate of one cent for each newspaper weighing
6 not exceeding one ounce, and an additional rate of one
7 cent for each additional ounce or fraction of an ounce, to
8 be prepaid in all cases. And the postage on periodicals
9 and magazines not sent from the office of publication, and
10 on those not sent to subscribers, though sent from the of-
11 fice of publication, and on pamphlets, shall be prepaid at
12 the rate of two cents for each ounce, and for each addi-
13 tional ounce or fraction of an ounce an additional rate.
14 And the Postmaster General shall direct in what manner
15 the evidence of prepayment, as provided for in this section,

16 shall be indicated on the "mailable matter" mentioned in
17 this section. And nothing in this act contained shall pre-
18 vent the free exchange of newspapers between the pub-
19 lishers thereof, as now provided by law.

POSTAGE STAMPS.

1 SEC. 8. *And be it further enacted*, That it shall be
2 the duty of the Postmaster General to provide suitable
3 stamps for the pre-payment of postage of the several de-
4 nominations of one and three cents, and such others as he
5 may deem expedient, and cause them to be furnished and
6 kept for sale in each of the post offices of the United
7 States, the net revenue of which not being less than five
8 dollars per quarter ; and it shall be the duty of each post-
9 master, so entitled to be supplied with stamps, to keep
10 them constantly on sale, by making seasonable applications
11 therefor to the Postmaster General. That any person
12 who shall counterfeit, alter, or forge any postage stamps,
13 or shall knowingly have in his possession any such false,
14 forged, or altered stamps, with intent to sell or use the
15 same as genuine, shall be guilty of felony, and be punished
16 by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars, or by impris-
17 onment not exceeding five years.

1 SEC. 9. *And be it further enacted*, That the direc-
2 tors of the Mint in the United States are authorized and
3 required to coin pieces of the value of three cents, com-

4 posed of three parts silver and one part alloy, which shall
5 be a lawful tender for all debts of thirty dollars or under,
6 due to the United States, and to individuals, persons, and
7 corporations.

ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION.

1 SEC. 10. *And be it further enacted*, That if, by rea-
2 son of the reduction of the rates of postage, contemplated
3 by this act, the compensation of any deputy postmaster
4 shall be reduced below what it was in the corresponding
5 quarters of the fiscal year ending the thirtieth June, eigh-
6 teen hundred and fifty-one, the Postmaster General is
7 hereby authorized to increase the compensation of every
8 such deputy postmaster; *Provided*, That the compensation
9 so increased, shall not exceed the amount allowed in the
10 corresponding quarters of the fiscal year aforesaid. That
11 the allowance of two cents each for the delivery of free
12 letters, is hereby abolished.

MAIL REGISTERS.

1 SEC. 11. *And be it further enacted*, That each post-
2 master who shall be required to keep a register of the arri-
3 val and departure of the mails, shall be allowed thirty cents
4 for each quarterly return he makes thereof to the General
5 Post Office.

1 SEC. 12. *And be it further enacted*, There shall be
2 charged upon all letters transported in the mails from any

3 of the Atlantic ports of the United States to any of the
4 ports in the United States upon the Pacific, or from any
5 of the ports of the United States upon the Pacific to any
6 of the Atlantic ports in the United States, four times the
7 usual rates ; and upon all newspapers, periodicals, and
8 magazines, when sent from the office of publication to sub-
9 scribers, double the rates prescribed in the sixth section of
10 this act, to be paid quarterly in advance by the persons to
11 whom sent, to the postmaster at the office where received ;
12 and when not sent from the office of publication, and also
13 when sent from the office of publication, but not sent to
14 subscribers, and upon pamphlets, double the rates prescrib-
15 ed in the seventh section of this act.

1 **SEC. 13.** *And be it further enacted,* That for the con-
2 veyance of the mails on any railroad of the first class, the
3 Postmaster General shall not, in contracts hereafter to be
4 made, pay a higher rate of compensation than one hundred
5 and fifty dollars per mile per annum, nor for carrying the
6 mails on any railroad of the second class, a greater com-
7 pensation than sixty dollars per mile per annum, nor
8 for carrying the mails on any railroad of the third class,
9 a greater compensation than thirty dollars per mile per
10 annum.

1 **SEC. 14.** *And be it further enacted,* That the Post-
2 master General is not required to discontinue the service

4 on any post road which fails to yield one-fourth of the ex-
5 penses incident to its establishment within the term of
6 three consecutive years.

1 SEC. 15. *And be it further enacted*, That nothing
2 herein contained, shall be so construed as to change, mod-
3 ify, or repeal those laws which confer the privilege of send-
4 ing or receiving through the mails, "mailable matter" free
5 of postage.

1 SEC. 16. *And be it further enacted*, That all acts or
2 parts of acts which come in conflict with the provisions of
3 this act be, and the same are hereby, repealed.